Appendix 12

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW OUTLINE

(Programme Officers at the Ministry of Education, Bhutan)

(Two Hours)

**Introduction**

Many factors shape the success of a school. Generally, parents and other stakeholders describe the success of a school in terms of its principal, teachers, students, and resources. Their descriptions are either positive or negative. While positive opinions indicate their satisfaction with the education system, negative opinions indicate their dissatisfaction with the same. Whether they are negative or positive, views of beneficiaries and stakeholders often influence the overall functioning of a school, and sometimes their views set a virtual context for the school. Obviously, educational policies are aimed at enhancing the satisfaction and addressing the dissatisfaction. All of you who are here today have been involved in developing educational programmes aimed at increasing school effectiveness. Drawing on this broad policy aim, we shall engage ourselves in group discussions on some educational experiences that you have had from some of the educational programmes. While there may not be right or wrong answers or solutions, your sincere and relevant discussions are highly solicited and appreciated.

1. National Policy for External Achievement Stimuli

(Probe: deregulation, parental involvement, choice of schools, privatization, school autonomy, accountability, and output-financing)

2. National Policy for Effective Learning Environment

(Probe: school/classroom climate, teachers’ self-efficacy, teachers’ appraisal, teachers’ professional development, school leadership, student well-being)

3. Mechanism for Evaluating National Education Policies

(Probe: issue identification, policy analysis, policy instruments, consultation, coordination, decision, implementation, and evaluation)

**Questioning Route**

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| **Type** | **Question** |
| Opening | 1. How long have you been working as a programme officer? |
| Introductory | 1. Recalling your experience, which educational programmes do you think had made our schools more answerable to different stakeholders?  (Probe1: deregulation, parental involvement, choice of schools, labour market, privatization, school autonomy, accountability, and output-financing). (Probe 2: effective learning environment) |
| Transition | 1. How important is it for parents to know about the performance of the school in which they plan to enrol their children? |
| Transition | 1. What are the likely sources of information available to parents to learn about prospective schools for their children? |
| Key | 1. How would the publicity of students’ achievement results, post school enrolments in colleges, and receipt of scholarships affect school performance? |
| Key | 1. What are some of the potential benefits of allowing students and parents to select schools? |
| Key | 1. How important is it for schools to have freedom in procuring teaching and learning resources? |
| Key | 1. How important is it for schools to have freedom in selecting, appointing, and terminating teachers and other staff? |
| Key | 1. How important is it for schools to be able to use its budget according to their needs and priorities? |
| Key | 1. If you had the authority to relate school performance to school financing, what would be your primary recommendation? |
| Introductory | 1. Thinking about some attributes of effective learning environment for schools, how many such factors can you promptly list?  (Probe: school/classroom climate, teacher appraisal, school leadership, student well-being) |
| Transition | 1. How do the elements (listed in the previous steps) contribute to building an education friendly atmosphere in schools? |
| Key | 1. How would you relate the elements of education friendly atmosphere to student performance? |
| Introductory | 1. Based on your experience, what are the various steps you use in formulating a policy on an educational programme?  (Probe: issue identification, policy analysis, policy instrumentation, consultation, coordination, decision, implementation, and evaluation) |
| Key | 1. How many times were you involved in evaluating educational policies? |
| Ending | 1. Is there anything that you would have said or discussed if you were given more time? |